

"I'm excited to be part of an effort to move this country in the direction of fiscal responsibility and future prosperity. As we talk dollars and cents, I hope we remember this is our opportunity to ask: what kind of a country do we want to live in? What should our priorities be as a people? Should everyone—rich or poor, young and old, rural or urban—share in the pain and share in the gain? I'm looking forward to the challenge of answering these tough questions and laying a transparent roadmap for the way forward for America's next generation of leaders."

- **Congressman Xavier Becerra (CA-31), April 27, 2010**

On February 18, 2010, President Barack Obama signed an executive order establishing a new, bipartisan National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform ([click here to read the executive order](#)). The President charged the Commission with "identifying policies to improve the fiscal situation in the medium term and to achieve fiscal sustainability over the long run," and recommend policies that will produce a balanced federal budget by 2015. The Commission's recommendations are due no later than December 1, 2010, with a vote of 14 out of 18 members required for approval of the final report.

Visit the Commission's [official website](#) to learn more.

On March 24, 2010, Speaker Pelosi [appointed](#) Congressman Becerra to the President's Commission as one of three House Democrats. On this page you will find information on Rep. Becerra's work with the committee.

"America Works When Americans Are Working"

Rep. Becerra believes that the best way to restore balance and sustainability to the federal budget is to make investments in education, infrastructure, and health care that build America's middle class and provide economic benefits for generations to come. This means not being "penny wise and pound foolish" by cutting vital programs that lay the foundation for future growth.

The Fiscal Responsibility Commission gives an opportunity to have an open and transparent conversation about our national priorities. Some questions that should be asked include:

- Do we value protecting our seniors and making college affordable over tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans?
- Should all Americans share in the cost of war, not just enlisted men and women?
- Are we willing to make investments in education and infrastructure now so that future generations will prosper?

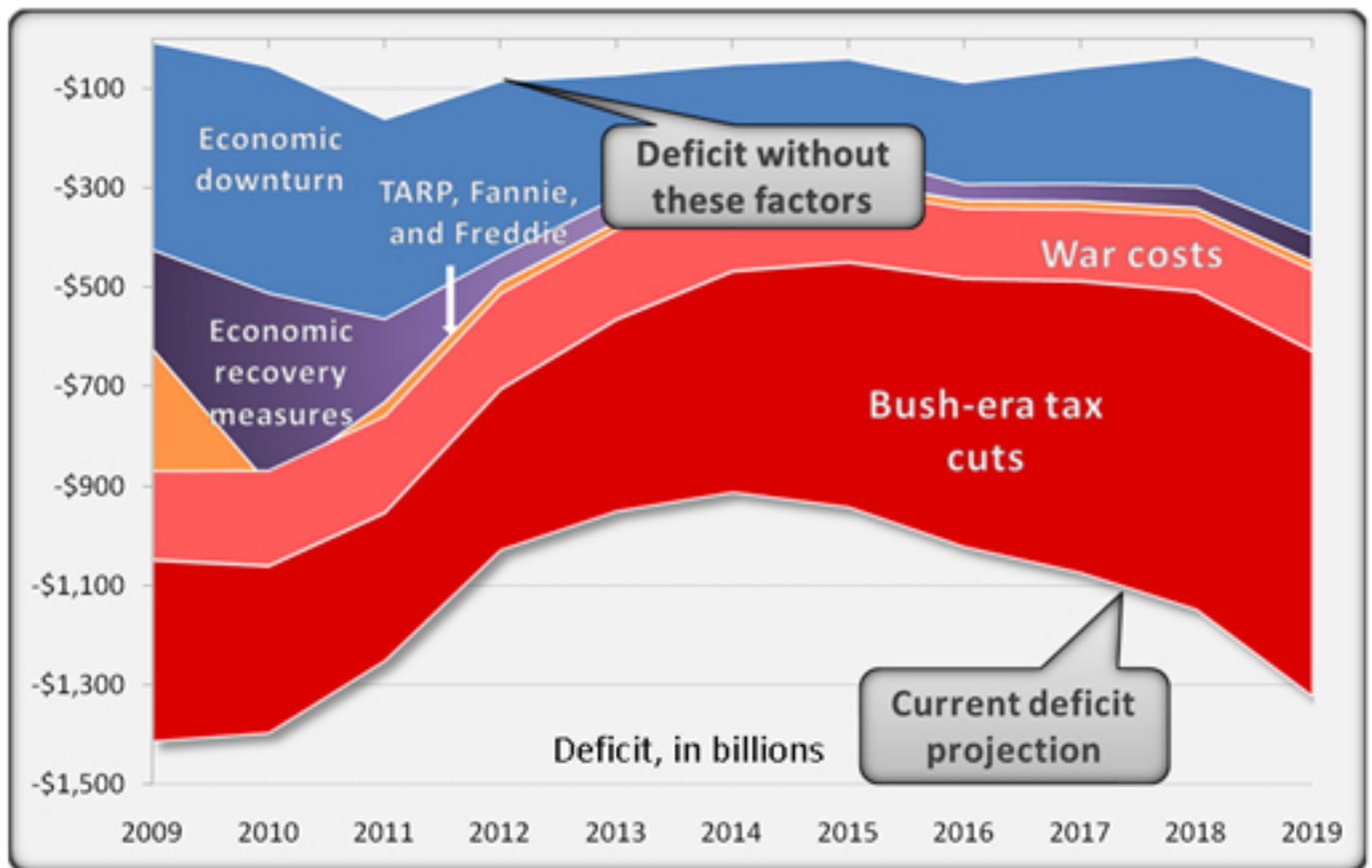
When working Americans can find good jobs that support a family, can afford to see a doctor when they get sick, and have a shot at sending their children to college and retiring with dignity—that's when America prospers and our budgets are in order. "America works when Americans are working," Rep. Becerra said during the Commission's first meeting. You can view Rep. Becerra's comments at the meeting [here](#) :

Putting it in Perspective

This fiscal crisis developed well before the current Congress and Administration, and was principally caused by the policies of the previous administration.

President Bush began with a projected \$4.2 trillion ten-year surplus when he took office. Eight years later, he left President Obama with a projected \$3.3 trillion ten-year deficit. As the chart below shows, the bulk of today's budget deficits projected over the next decade can be traced to the Bush-era tax cuts for the rich, the unfunded wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and under-regulated big banks and Wall Street who contributed to the current economic recession:

Legacy of Bush-Era Policies on Budget Deficits



Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities analysis based on CBO estimates

Original: [The Economic and Budgetary System: A Framework for Policy Analysis](#) by [David I. Hudson](#) and [John A. Williams](#)

Hearing From You

Moving forward, Rep. Becerra wants to hear from you. What do you think should be done to improve the fiscal situation and build a foundation for sustained prosperity into the future?

- [Click here to leave your comments on the Becerra Blog](#) ;
- [Click here to take Rep. Becerra's quick survey on the Commission's priorities](#) ;
- [Click here to email your ideas to the Commission](#)

And continue to check back here for updates on Rep. Becerra's work on the commission.

Commission Meetings

Below you will find complete video recordings of the commission meetings.

First Meeting: Tuesday, April 27, 2010